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RUCNDT/USMISSION USUN NEW YORK PRIORITY 7159
RUEHJM/AMCONSUL JERUSALEM PRIORITY 0020
RHMFISS/CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL PRIORITY
RHMFISS/COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE PRIORITY
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UNCLAS TEL AVIV 001421

STATE FOR NEA, NEA/IPA, NEA/PPD

WHITE HOUSE FOR PRESS OFFICE, SIT ROOM
NSC FOR NEA STAFF

SECDEF WASHDC FOR USDP/ASD-PA/ASD-ISA
HQ USAF FOR XXXX
DA WASHDC FOR SASA
JOINT STAFF WASHDC FOR PA
CDR USCENTCOM MACDILL AFB FL FOR POLAD/USIA ADVISOR
COMSOCEUR VAIHINGEN GE FOR PAO/POLAD
COMSIXTHFLT FOR 019

JERUSALEM ALSO ICD
LONDON ALSO FOR HKANONA AND POL
PARIS ALSO FOR POL
ROME FOR MFO

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SUBJECT: ISRAEL MEDIA REACTION

SUBJECTS COVERED IN THIS REPORT:

[1](#)1. Mideast

[1](#)2. Iran

Key stories in the media:

All media led with yesterday's bulldozer rampage in Jerusalem. The media reported that three were killed and 80 injured. The media highlighted the fate of a baby whose mother was crushed to death while saving her child. The perpetrator was Husam Taysir Dwayat (or

Duwyat), a resident of the East Jerusalem neighborhood of Sur Bahir, who appears to have acted on his own. Dwayat served jail time following a conviction of rape, and also committed drug offenses. However, The Jerusalem Post reported that three groups claimed responsibility for the attack -- Fatah's Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigades; the Galilee Freedom Battalion, which is suspected of being affiliated with Hizbullah; and the PFLP. Media reported that the PA condemned the attack, saying that such methods harm the interests of the Palestinian people. The Jerusalem Post reported that Hamas praised Dwayat's act. Major media reported that PM Ehud Olmert and Defense Minister Ehud Barak are seriously considering pulling down Dwayat's home. Israel Radio reported that UN Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon denounced the attack, and that the Israeli delegation at the UN has asked the UN Security Council to condemn the attack unequivocally and unconditionally.

All media quoted Hizbullah leader Hassan Nasrallah as saying through a video link in a press conference yesterday in Beirut that the prisoner exchange with Israel will take place on or around July 15. Nasrallah also says a written report that Hizbullah will submit to the German mediator on missing IAF navigator Ron Arad contains a "definite conclusion based on ... witness accounts [gathered] on the ground." He described the effort made in investigating Arad's fate as unprecedented, but he did not give details. Nasrallah was quoted as saying that his men have been investigating Arad's fate since 2004, and that they have reached a "firm conclusion" on what happened to him. In the past, Nasrallah has said he believed Arad was dead but did not know the location of his remains. Regarding the welfare of abducted Israeli soldiers Eldad Regev and Ehud Goldwasser, Nasrallah was quoted as saying that "so far Hizbullah has not handed over any information about the fate of the two soldiers. Anything said in Israel is mere speculation. We have provided no information."

Leading media reported that yesterday Palestinians angry over not being allowed to enter Egypt from Gaza stormed the Rafah border crossing.

Ha'aretz reported that in defiance of commitments to the U.S. to freeze construction in the settlements, Defense Minister Barak has authorized the erection of a boarding school in a yeshiva in Hebron's Jewish quarter.

Leading media reported that a few hours after the terrorist attack on Jaffa Road, the Knesset plenum approved in their preliminary reading a number of bills aimed at stripping terrorists' families and relatives of their Israeli citizenship or their residency status in Israel, and prohibiting erection of mourning shelters or public expression of mourning for a person who has committed an act of terrorism.

Israel Radio and The Jerusalem Post's web site reported that French President Nicolas Sarkozy expressed support for Israel in its struggle to free Gilad Shalit, a dual Israeli-French citizen. Speaking of yesterday's release of Ingrid Betancourt, who had been held hostage by Columbian rebels, Sarkozy ended his address with a "message to Gilad Shalit and his parents." "We have not forgotten," he was quoted as saying, "France is always ready to enlist in the battle for a man held unjustly." The Jerusalem Post quoted Egyptian sources as saying yesterday that Olmert's emissary on the prisoner issue, Ofer Dekel, and Hamas representatives are expected to begin intensive indirect negotiations for Shalit's release within a week to 10 days. Before that time, the diplomatic-security cabinet is expected to convene and discuss changing the criteria governing which Palestinians can be released, to allow Dekel more flexibility in the negotiations.

Media reported that at an economic meeting in Tokyo, top Israeli, Palestinian, and Jordanian cabinet ministers heard Japanese FM Masahiko Komura reaffirm his country's commitment to an agro-industrial project in Jericho.

Upon the occasion of the Fourth of July, six media figures and Alon Pinkas, former consul-general in New York, write in Maariv about their perceptions of America. Ilana Dayan of Channel 2-TV hopes that Obama's election will bring social change; Pinkas sees 2008 as the "year of democracy"; Yehonatan Gefen, a part-time resident of New York, says that he has seen racism and ignorance swamp America

in the nineties and this decade; Ron Maiberg affirms that the U.S., where all consumer goods are made in China and unemployment is rife, is an "empty label."

I1. Mideast:

Summary:

Military correspondent Amir Rappaport wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv: "The tahdiya [truce] in Gaza increases the chances that in the coming weeks there will be more terror attacks coming from Judea and Samaria [i.e. the West Bank] or East Jerusalem."

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized: "We must, at the very least, acknowledge that ... the relationship between Jerusalem's Arabs and Jews, and its security ramifications, which has applied since 1967 needs reevaluation."

Middle East affairs commentator Dr. Guy Bechor, a lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Center, wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot: "With wise and consistent Israeli policy, we will sit on the sidelines and observe how the Palestinians and the Egyptians fight each other, and not the other way around."

Block Quotes:

II. "The Law of Connected Vessels"

Military correspondent Amir Rappaport wrote in the popular, pluralist Maariv (7/3): "The law of connected vessels also works in terror: the tahdiya [truce] in Gaza increases the chances that in the coming weeks there will be more terror attacks coming from Judea and Samaria [i.e. the West Bank] or East Jerusalem. Many parties have an interest in this summer being awash in blood.... It is important to remember that [one of those], Islamic Jihad, is very closely connected to Iran, which has no compunctions about encouraging terror in Israeli territory. Although the Palestinian organizations have a clear interest in committing terror attacks, the greatest danger this summer is, in fact, to northern Israel, from Hizbullah. The signs are accumulating that even though the matter of Imad Mughniyah's assassination, attributed to Israel, has dropped from the headlines, preparations are in fact increasing for carrying out such a terror attack or even a series of terror attacks. These terror attacks would occur so that the fingerprints of the organization that commits them would be unverifiable. The greatest danger is to Israeli and Jewish institutions overseas, but Hizbullah has already proven in the past that it is also capable of getting terror attacks perpetrated inside the Green Line.... In any case, even if some organization was behind yesterday's terror attack, and even if it was a 'private initiative' by an individual, we can assume, unfortunately, that this will not be the last terror attack. "

II. "Terror in Jerusalem"

The conservative, independent Jerusalem Post editorialized (7/3): "The people of Jerusalem have been badly traumatized. There is a gnawing sense that the tranquility residents have enjoyed for some years now, since the unofficial end of the second Intifada, may be over -- and that the biggest danger emanates from within the boundaries of the city itself.... The Arab neighborhoods that dot metropolitan Jerusalem -- not just east, but north and south as well -- were absorbed into the capital's boundaries after the 1967 Six Day War and its Arab residents issued blue [Israeli] ID cards. Eligible to apply for full Israeli citizenship, they overwhelmingly chose not to do so, in solidarity with the Palestinian cause. The dichotomy under which these Arabs live seems to be growing ever more strained. They may work for Jews; they may receive health and social benefits from the Zionist state, but culturally and politically they are inseparable from the surrounding Arab milieu. They watch the same satellite TV stations and hear preachers espousing the same radical messages as their compatriots in the West Bank and Gaza. We must, at the very least, acknowledge that this

framework -- the relationship between Jerusalem's Arabs and Jews, and its security ramifications -- which has applied since 1967 needs reevaluation. To do otherwise would leave us in denial."

III. "Gaza Fell on Them"

Middle East affairs commentator Dr. Guy Bechor, a lecturer at the Interdisciplinary Center, wrote in the mass-circulation, pluralist Yediot Aharonot (7/3): "Yesterday, dozens, perhaps even hundreds, of young Palestinians began to gather on the Palestinian side of the Rafah crossing and to throw stones at the Egyptian security forces, which used water canons against them. These pictures seemed to be

taken from 'our' Intifada. It turns out that if Egypt won't control Gaza, Gaza will control Egypt.... Just as Egypt knew how to play the Palestinian card against us, Hamas is using it against Egypt.... And why does Gaza need the Egyptians so much? Egypt is Hamas's only path to the world, since only (for now) humanitarian cases enter through Israel and the Hamas leadership cannot pass. Egypt is viewed as Hamas's strategic home front, since Hamas's hope is that now that it has taken control of Gaza, its mother movement, the Muslim Brotherhood, will one day control all of Egypt. Furthermore, Hamas wants legitimacy, and Egypt can give it to it. If its border with Egypt is open, this is almost recognition as a state. Sit quietly, Israel, don't interfere. With wise and consistent Israeli policy, we will sit on the sidelines and observe how the Palestinians and the Egyptians fight each other, and not the other way around."

12. Iran:

Summary:

Columnist Ari Shavit wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz: "It is far from certain and far from likely that the coming winter will be an Iranian winter. But Israel must treat this summer as though the possibility of an Iranian winter were not a distant one.... After two years of spin, it is time for action."

Editor-in-Chief Amnon Lord wrote in the editorial of the nationalist, Orthodox Makor Rishon-Hatzofe: "Those who throughout the current decade invested all diplomatic and military resources in the disengagement plan ... now discover that the handling of the existential problem has been forsaken -- certainly so on the diplomatic level."

Block Quotes:

1. "Facing an Iranian Winter"

Columnist Ari Shavit wrote in the independent, left-leaning Ha'aretz (7/3): "Here is the wild scenario: In November, after Senator Barack Obama becomes the president-elect of the United States, outgoing President George W. Bush will launch a strike at Iran. The strike might be a naval siege, a military show of muscle or a comprehensive aerial assault on the Iranian nuclear program. In reasonable times, reasonable people would dismiss this wild scenario out of hand.... But the times are not reasonable ones, and the men involved are not reasonable men. The logic that guides Bush and Dick Cheney is one that Western public opinion and its shapers cannot always understand.... In any case, the Iran of the ayatollahs is a sophisticated and strong religious power. If it is backed into a corner, Iran, too, will prefer to go out with a bang and not a whimper. No one today knows for sure what the nature and impact of such a bang would be. A serious state must regard seriously any scenario liable to shape its future, for better or worse.... It is far from certain and far from likely that the coming winter will be an Iranian winter. But Israel must treat this summer as though the possibility of an Iranian winter were not a distant one.... After two years of spin, it is time for action. After two years of bile, it is time to extinguish hatreds and bandage wounds. Israel is not as hollow and degenerate as Mahmoud Ahmadinejad believes. But to face Ahmadinejad, Israel must come to its senses."

II. "Israel's Leaders Woke Up Too Late"

Editor-in-Chief Amnon Lord wrote in the editorial of the nationalist, Orthodox Makor Rishon-Hatzofe (7/3): "The continued verbal barrage about the Iranian nuclear program includes the claim that Israel has lost precious time in its preparation for the critical and that it is now late. If this description, which appeared in yesterday's Maariv, is true, it reflects shortsightedness unexpected from Israeli leaders. Many highly negative things have been said about Israel's leaders. But one cannot believe that over the past decade one of them could have been lenient regarding the threat emanating from Iran.... Those who, in 2000 and 2005, didn't see the connection between the incipient threat from Iran and the dangers that accumulated at Israel's doorstep were myopic, almost blind. The conclusion from the gloomy Lebanese and Gazan affairs is that the public cannot rule out the fact that the Israeli leadership woke up a little too late to the issue of Iran's nuclearization. Those who throughout the current decade invested all diplomatic and military resources in the disengagement plan and in a desperate attempt to neutralize the Palestinian issue, now discover that the handling of the existential problem has been forsaken -- certainly so on the diplomatic level."

JONES